

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT  
NORTHERN DISTRICT OF OHIO

INTERNATIONAL WATCHMAN, INC.,

Plaintiff,

vs.

81 JANUARY, INC., *et al.*,

Defendants.

CASE NO. 1:17-CV-497

OPINION & ORDER

[Resolving Docs. [6](#), [12](#), [15](#)]

JAMES S. GWIN, UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE:

Plaintiff International Watchman, Inc. sued Defendant 81 January, Inc. for trademark infringement.<sup>1</sup> Defendant’s Director, William Shaine, moved pro se to dismiss the lawsuit on jurisdictional grounds.<sup>2</sup> Shaine also asked for leave to appear in this case.<sup>3</sup> Plaintiff moved to strike Defendant’s motions, arguing that corporations cannot litigate pro se.<sup>4</sup>

Plaintiff’s argument wins.

Under Ohio law, a licensed attorney must represent a corporation in all non-small-claims-court proceedings.<sup>5</sup>

Accordingly, the Court **GRANTS** Plaintiff’s motion to strike Defendant’s Director Shaine’s motions to dismiss and for leave to appear.

<sup>1</sup> Doc. 1.

<sup>2</sup> Docs. 6 & 15.

<sup>3</sup> *Id.*

<sup>4</sup> Doc. 12.

<sup>5</sup> *Gass v. Headlands Contracting & Tunneling, Inc.*, 2008 WL 4964656, at \*1 (Ohio Ct. App. Nov. 21, 2008) (“[O]utside of small claims court, an individual, including a corporate officer, who is not an attorney, may not appear in court or maintain litigation *in propria persona* on behalf of a corporation.”); see also *Disciplinary Counsel v. Kafele*, 843 N.E.2d 169, 173 (Ohio 2006) (“And with limited exception, unauthorized practice occurs when a layperson renders legal services for another person or for a corporate entity by attempting to manage legal actions and proceedings before courts of law.”).

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IT IS SO ORDERED.

Dated: May 18, 2017

s/ *James S. Gwin*  
JAMES S. GWIN  
UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE